

Message Text

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TO AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE PRIORITY

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EXDIS

E.O. 11652:GDS

TAGS: PINT, CS

SUBJECT: INOCENTE ALVAREZ

REFS: A) SAN JOSE 4303, B) SAN JOSE 4190

1. DEPARTMENT IS PROCEEDING TO SET UP ALVAREZ MEETING. HOWEVER, WE ARE INCREASINGLY PUZZLED BY THE SERIES OF CONFLICTING PERCEPTIONS WE ARE RECEIVING IN THIS CASE AND SOLICIT EMBASSY'S COUNSEL IN ATTEMPTING TO FIGURE OUT JUST WHAT IS GOING ON. OVER TIME WE HAD FORMED THE TENTATIVE IMPRESSION THAT PEPE FIGUERES WAS ATTEMPTING TO PROTECT VESCO AND THAT PRESIDENT ODUBER, WHILE NOT WISHING TO BE FORCED INTO A CONFRONTATION WITH DON PEPE ON THIS ISSUE, WAS BEING SUBJECTED TO INCREASING POLITICAL EMBARRASSMENT BY VESCO'S CONTINUED PRESENCE IN COSTA RICA. (THIS LAST IS TEMPERED, OF COURSE, BY INFORMATION INDICATING THAT ODUBER HIMSELF MAY HAVE SOME BUSINESS CONNECTIONS WITH VESCO.) IF THE ABOVE IS CORRECT IT SEEMS UNUSUAL THAT ALVAREZ, BY HIS OWN TESTIMONY, HAS BEEN ABLE TO ;CLEAR; HIS PROPOSED SESSION WITH THE SEC WITH PEPE AND WITH GONZALO FACIO (WHO WE WOULD HAVE

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SUPPOSED TO BE MORE OR LESS ON PEPE'S SIDE ON THIS ISSUE)

BUT ANTICIPATES PROBLEMS WITH ODUBER. (WE ALSO FIND IT ODD THAT PEPE GOES ALONG BUT JOSE MARTI DOES NOT.) ONE POSSIBLE EXPLANATION THAT OCCURS TO US IS THAT WE REALLY ARE ABOUT TO GET INVOLVED IN SOME ESSENTIALLY INTRA-COSTA RICAN MANEUVERING BETWEEN DON PEPE AND DANIEL.

BUT IF SO, TO WHAT END?

2. ALSO SOMEWHAT TROUBLING HAS BEEN THE CHANGE OVER/ TIME FROM AN AUGUST SIGNAL BY TAREFA, PRESUMABLY ON BEHALF OF HIS FATHER-IN-LAW, OF INTEREST IN MEETING WITH THE SEC TO APPARENT LACK OF INTEREST, FOLLOWED BY A RESUMPTION OF INTEREST BY ALVAREZ, ON OCTOBER 31. WHAT FACTORS WERE AT PLAY TO SO ALTER ALVAREZ'S THINKING.

3. ALVAREZ'S REASONS FOR MEETING WITH THE SEC IN REF A ARE NOT VERY CONVINCING. SHOULD HE STAY IN SAN JOSE IT IS NOT CLEAR WHAT TYPE OF PROTECTION THE US GOVERNMENT COULD OFFER HIM. ALVAREZ MIGHT BE INTERESTED IN OBTAINING SOME TYPE OF IMMUNITY BUT APART FROM THAT WE WONDER WHAT OTHER ADVANTAGES ALVEREZ SEES IN THE MEETING FOR HIMSELF, OR FOR OTHERS. IT JUST MIGHT BE THAT THE LIQUIDATORS WORKING IN COSTA RICA, OR VARIOUS SEC INSPIRED ACTIONS ELSEWHERE, ARE THREATENING HIM IN WAYS WE DO NOT PRESENTLY APPRECIATE.

4. OPERATIONALLY WE HAVE ASSUMED THAT ALVAREZ MIGHT BE SOMEWHAT APPREHENSIVE ABOUT HIS DISCUSSION AND WE HAD DELIBERATELY ATTEMPTED TO LIMIT NUMBERS OF USG PARTICIPANTS. IS THIS A REAL CONCERN? KISSINGER

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